

Prabuddha Bharata

दक्षिणत जाग्रत



प्राच्य परासिर्वाधत।

Kulka Upt. I. iii. 2

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

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CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

[*Translated from Bengali.*]

XI.—*Concluded.*

[Place :—*The Alambazar Math.*

Year : 1897.

Subjects : *Sannyasins of the Vividisa class swell in number after the age of Bhagawan Buddha.—Though the monastic institution existed before his time, it was not universally recognised that renunciation was the highest goal of human life.—Refutation of arguments such as "Idle monks do not come to any use for the country" and so on.—The true Sannyasin works for the good of the world even holding off from his own salvation.*]

Disciple.— The Upanishads, Sir, do not clearly teach about renunciation and Sannyasa.

Swamiji.— What do you talk like a mad man! Renunciation is the very soul of Upanishad. Illumination born of discriminative reflection is the ultimate aim of Upanishadic knowledge. My belief, however, is that it was since the time of Buddha that the monastic vow was preached more thoroughly all over India, and renunciation, the giving up of sense-enjoyment, was recognised as the highest aim of religious life. And Hinduism has absorbed into itself this Buddhist spirit

of renunciation. Never was a great man of such renunciation born in this world like Buddha.

Disciple.— Do you then mean, Sir, that before Buddha was born there existed very little of the spirit of renunciation in the country, and there was hardly any Sannyasin at all?

Swamiji.— Who says that? The monastic institution was there, but the generality of people did not recognise it as the goal of life; there was no such staunch spirit for it, there was no such firmness in spiritual discrimination. So even when Buddhadeva betook him-

self to so many Yogis and Sadhus nowhere did he acquire the peace he wanted. And so after that, to realise the Highest he withdrew to loneliness and seated on a spot all by himself with the famous words: "इहासने शुष्पतु मे शरीरे"—"let my body wither away on this seat" etc., rose from it only after becoming the Buddha, the Illumined One. All the many *Maths* that you now see in India occupied by monks were once in the possession of Buddhism. The Hindus have only made them their own now by modifying them in their own fashion. Really speaking, the institution of Sannyasins originated with Buddha, he breathed life into the dead bones of this institution.

Swami Ramakrishnananda, the brother-disciple of Swamiji, said, "But the ancient law-books and Puranas are good authority that all the four *Ashramas* existed in India before Buddha was born." Swamiji replied, "Most of the Puranas and codes of Manu and others as well as much of the Mahabharata form but recent literature. Bhagavan Buddha is much earlier than all that." Swami Ramakrishnananda said, "On that supposition, discussions about Buddhism would be found in the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, law-books and the like. But since such discussions are not found in these ancient books, how can you say that Buddha antedated them all? In some three or four Puranas, of course, accounts of the Buddhistic doctrine are partially given, but from these, it can't be concluded that the scriptures of the Hindus such as the law-books and Puranas are of recent date."

Swamiji.— Please read history,* you will find that Hinduism has become so great only by absorbing all the ideas of Buddha.

S. Ramakrishnananda.— It seems to me that Buddha has only left revived the great Hindu ideas by thoroughly practising in his life such principles as renunciation, non-attachment and so on.

Swamiji.— But just this position can't be proved. For, we don't get any history before Buddha was born. If we accept history only as authority, we have to admit that in the midst of the profound darkness of the ancient times, Buddha only shines forth as a figure with the light of knowledge playing upon him.

Now the topic of Sannyasa was resumed and Swamiji said, "Wheresoever might lie the origin of Sannyasa, the goal of human life is to become a knower of Brahman by embracing this vow of renunciation. The supreme end is to enter the life of Sannyasa. They alone are blessed indeed, who have broken off from worldly life through renunciation coming into their soul."

Disciple.— But many people declare the opinion now-a-days, Sir, that with the increasing number of wandering monks in the country, much harm has resulted to its material progress. They assert on the ground that these monks idly roam about depending on householders for their living, that these folks are of no help to them in the cause of social and national advancement."

Swamiji.— But please explain to me first what is meant by the term material or secular advancement.

Disciple.— Yes; it is to do as people in the West do in securing the necessities of life through education, in promoting through science such objects in life as commerce, industry, communications, and so on.

* Evidently, during the argumentation, Swamiji is taking his stand on the conclusions of modern historical studies, thereby giving his encouragement and support to such new efforts and methods. But we know from one of his letters to a former

editor of this magazine, that Swamiji broke off later on from the position of these modern scholars and worked out the pre-Buddhistic origin of much of modern Hinduism, which these scholars are still fond of tracing to Buddhistic sources.—Ed. P. B.

Swamiji.— But, can all these be ever brought about, if real *rajas* is not awakened in man? Wandering all over India, nowhere I see this *rajas* manifesting itself. It is all *tamas* and *tamas*! The mass of the people lie engulfed in *tamas*, and only among the monks could I find this developing *rajas* and *sattva*. These people are like the backbone of the country. The real Sannyasin is a teacher of householders. It is with the light and teaching obtained from them that householders of old had triumphed many a time in the battles of life. The householders give food and clothing to the Sadhus only in return for their invaluable teachings. Had there been no such mutual dealings in India, her people would have become extinct like American Indians by this time. It is because the householders still give their morsels to the Sadhus that they are yet able to keep their foothold on the path of progress. The Sannyasins are not devoid of work. They are really the fountainhead of all activity. The householders see lofty ideals carried into practice in the lives of the Sadhus and accept from them such noble ideas; and it is only through that, that they have been and are still enabled to fight the battle of life from their spheres of *karma*. The example of holy Sadhus makes them work out holy ideas in life and inspires them with true devotion and energy for work. The Sannyasis inspire the householders in all noble causes by embodying in their lives the highest principle of giving up everything for the sake of God and the good of the world, and as a return the householders give them a few doles of food. And the very capacity and disposition to grow that food on the soil develops in the people because of the blessings and good wishes of the all-renouncing monks. It is because of not understanding the deeper issues that people blame the monastic institution. Whatever may be the case in other countries, in this land the vessel of the householder's life does not sink only because the Sannyasis are at its helm.

Disciple.— But, Sir, how many monks are really to be found who are truly devoted to the good of men?

Swamiji.— Ah, quite enough if one great Sannyasin like Thakur comes in a thousand years! For thousand years after his advent, people may well guide themselves by those ideas and ideals he leaves behind. It is only because this monastic institution exists in the country that men of greatness like him are born here. There are defects, more or less, in all such great institutions of life. But what is the reason that in spite of its faults, this noble institution stands supreme yet over all the other institutions of life? It is because the true Sannyasis forego even their own salvation and live for doing good to the world. If you don't feel grateful to such a noble institution, lie on you again and again!

While speaking all these words, Swamiji's countenance became all aglow with lustre. And before the eyes of the disciple he shone as the very embodiment of Sannyasa while holding forth on its glories.

Then, as if realising deep within his soul the greatness of this institution, self-absorbed, he broke forth in sweetest symphony:—

वेदान्तवाक्येषु सदा रमन्तो
भिन्नान्नमात्रेण च तुष्टिमन्तः ।
अशोकमन्तःकरणे चरन्तः
कौपीनवन्तः खलु भाग्यवन्तः ॥

"Brooding blissfully in mind over the texts of the Vedanta, quite contented with food obtained as alms and wandering forth with a heart untouched by any feeling of grief, thrice happy are the Sannyasins, with only their loin-cloth for dress."

Resuming the talk, he went on thus: "For the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, is the Sannyasin born. His life is all in vain, indeed, who, embracing Sannyasa, forgets this ideal. The Sannyasin, verily, is born into this world, to lay down his

life for others, to quench the bitter cries of men piercing the skies, to wipe off the tears of the widowed, to bring peace to the soul of the bereaved mother, to equip the ignorant masses for the battle of life, to accomplish the secular and spiritual well-being of all through the diffusion of scriptural teachings and to arouse the sleeping lion of Brahman in all by throwing in the light of knowledge."

Addressing then his brothers of the Order, he said, "Our life is *बात्मनो मोक्षार्थं जगद्धिताय च*, for the sake of our self-liberation as well as for the good of the world. So what are you sitting idle for? Arise, awake; wake up yourselves, and awaken others. Achieve the very object of human life before you pass off — "Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached."

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE demand for the practical man is a demand in every sphere of life,—the man who is not too much given to speculating about results, but is always prone to act and experiment to see for himself whether the results he values do actually flow therefrom and how. The practical man is thus blessed with a subtle wisdom which strikes the balance even between thought and action, so that neither can overfeed itself, as it were, at the expense of the other and thus spoil the wholesomeness of life. For the boat of life proceeds straight to success, only when both these oars ply evenly between themselves, but if there is acceleration on one side and slackness on the other, the whole of life is bound to go astray. Thus it is not enough for a man to be merely thoughtful, he must be practical withal.

Success in every sphere of life depends on this even growth of thoughtfulness and practicality. But in our country in the present age various circumstances have conspired to make us slow both to recognise and apply this golden truth. When we were at the fag-end of a cycle of decline in old modes of life, once very successful no doubt, down came upon us the impact of Western civilisation and culture; and new aggressive ideas broke the growing *laxitas* or inertness of our life. The very first effect of this impact therefore was to stir our thought-life to its depths. We

were forced to be thoughtful as never perhaps we had been in all the past epochs of our history. But all this thoughtfulness distracted us from all the old grooves of practicality and inaugurated a long period of transition characterised by confusions on one hand and experiments to remedy them on the other. This groping for real reconstructive principles in every sphere of life is still going on, and the demand made by circumstances on our thinking faculty has been abnormally heavier. As a collateral consequence, we have on the arena of life an abnormal supply of smart intellectuals, brisk in thought but correspondingly slack in action.

The remedy will come only when the necessity which lies behind this over-speculative tendency is met and removed, and this necessity will disappear only when the educated countrymen find themselves in possession of the true principles of the Indian reconstruction. When once the struggle to arrive at these principles is brought to a successful issue, the impulse to act will appear of itself and real, self-assured practicality will be in full evidence in every sphere of our life. So it is of supreme importance for our country that all our thoughtful men should not even for a moment now relax their mental grip on the fundamental problem of all Indian problems, the problem as to how our life as a whole has to be reconstructed in

modern times. We can never hope for solid, lasting results, if we go to work, as we are doing now in every field of our life's activities, with confused ideas in mind about this supreme and central problem in India. Every worker in every field, of course, cannot be expected to have a clear grasp of the larger reconstructive principles, but where, alas, are even those few among the many such who may claim to have that mental grasp of principles?

The sort of education our youngmen are getting now-a-days in the very formative period of their life does not help them directly to equip and enrich their minds with these true principles of reconstructing Indian life in all its aspects. This English education is no aid at all to them in properly understanding their own country and its history. It supplies their minds with formulæ of thought and activity which have their proper application in far-off countries pursuing a course of history different both in aim and method from that of their own country. Moreover, the Western culture that they imbibe does not directly develop any discriminative insight into *fundamentally* different types of historical evolution. For it is itself the product of a singular type of such evolution, and so it applies its own criteria and standards in studying history in every other country. This narrow, self-sufficient standpoint in studying life and history has been imported into India by English education, and when our educated youngmen grow up to be workers in the various spheres of Indian life, they naturally think and act from this narrow standpoint, misjudging the whole of life and its surroundings, placed in the midst of which they have to work out a brighter future for their country. Solid, lasting success in every constructive work is, therefore, being marred by unforeseen miscalculations. And there is no even flow in the stream of all our constructive efforts and achievements. Every large wave

of enthusiasm we create, breaks up into divergent currents. There is no firm collective movement of life in the vast chequered procession of thoughts and activities in the country,—no making real history for it, but loitering in a long, confused interlude of perplexities.

The age of real reconstruction will come only with the dawn of the light of discriminative insight into the two different types of historical evolution, the Western and the Indian. Our intellect is at present under the spell of the former type, and we do not even recognise that there may be a different type of historical evolution, different both in method and in the persistency of one aim. Speaking in a broad psychological sense, man may be the same man all the world over, but in another sense, in the sense of how he chooses to react on his environment in life, how he prefers to adjust the various concerns of life, man and his history are not bound to be the same everywhere on this globe. Even at its very starting-point, we find history in India striking a keynote of evolution which history nowhere else adopts even throughout centuries of its course. All ancient societies are found to develop four phases of activity in their life,—the warrior phase, the priest phase, the tradesman phase and the labour phase. Now, when all these phases of activity are evolved, history takes an uncertain course of struggle or competition between all these phases to gain the supremacy in power and initiative. And in Western history, we find the fighting kings naturally seizing this supreme power, till political struggles for centuries transfer this power to a state, in the life and function of which the whole people of a country have a right to participate. So the whole evolution here proceeds essentially on the basis of material power and its organised expression, and there is no higher principle operating in the evolution to hold the balance between the claims of the four interests,—

the ecclesiastical, the trading, the political and labour.

But we find it clearly stated in the Vedas* that even after the evolution of these four interests in the ancient human society in India, man could not feel himself well-equipped enough for the march of history—**स नैव व्यभवत् ।** And why? Because the Kshatriyas, or the political interest, require to be subordinated to some superior power. So besides the usual four factors of social life and evolution, a fifth factor, equally supreme over all, had to be evolved, and its name was Dharma. And this Dharma was **क्षत्रस्य क्षत्रं**, the king over the kings. It was evolved to be the real sovereign power to rule over all the interests and pursuits of human life. It took many ages of early history to bring out this supreme governing factor of social life in the consciousness of the ancient people in India, by a wonderful system of education most strenuously imposed upon them by sages who were called the Rishis. But when once this supreme factor was made operative in the collective consciousness of the people, the whole course of historical evolution undergone by the four-fold interests in human pursuit, became unique in the case of India, as evidently it was bound to be. For history here had quite a new method to apply in the organisation of life, while in other countries, for the sake of the same organisation history had to rely purely

* Brihadaranyaka, I, 4, 14.

on the natural conflict of self-interest in men settling down eventually to some stable or unstable equilibrium of rights.

In understanding Indian history, therefore, —in understanding the problems of her past and the problems of her future, it is indispensable to study the operation of Dharma,—the fifth factor in the sociological evolution,—in the development of all the various institutions of Indian life. The education of no Indian youth is complete unless he has full knowledge of this operation, unless he knows what is really *meant* by the fifth factor in Indian life, the supreme constructive factor in the upbuilding of Indian life in all its aspects. It is easy to translate the term Dharma by some such expression as the spiritual sense of duty, but nowhere else in the world except in India we find this Dharma, the **क्षत्रस्य क्षत्रं**, the king over kings, the power above all state-power. In a clear conception of this Dharma and of its workings as the greatest architect of human society, of human nationhood, lies the only key to the proper understanding and study of India, of her past and of her future possibilities. No power on earth can reconstruct Indian life again in modern times excepting this Dharma, and that is the only reason why in the Prabuddha Bharata, we are returning again and again (even to the disgust of many impatient friends and readers) to the supreme problem of Indian reconstruction on the basis of this Dharma, the nation-builder in India.

THE TRUE WORKER.

WORK lies waiting for us all around. The idleness, the apathy of centuries has to be made amends for. Long have we allowed things to drift into confusion and decay. On all sides we are now called upon to rebuild, to reconstruct. On all sides, human sufferings, human disabilities, human

ignorance call for urgent help and service. Fortunately, after ages of indifference, the feeling in response has come. We cannot sit idle, we must work. Workers, workers,—is the demand; and the demand goes forth all over the country.

But what is it to be a real worker in India?

For surely we do not want spurious workers, who create more of friction than of amity, more of noise than of solid result. We do not want workers who merely agitate on the surface instead of building up from lasting foundations. We want lasting, effective work, no nine days' show, howsoever appealing. We want to deal straight with the very soul of our country, not to set up mere ebullitions on the surface, which crackle much for a while and then cool down to lifelessness.

Now more than at any time of her history, India wants real workers,—workers who value self-help above everything else, to whom self-help is the highest principle and method in all the affairs of life. And—to digress a little—self-help in man can never be something mechanical; you cannot put men under a central state-machine of the Western brand and expect them to excel in the virtue of self-help. The minority who work the machine may, of course, have self-government and self-help, but what of the mass of people who in all calculations should constitute the real nation? Under such a machine, they do not help themselves to do all the duties of their life, as our ancient polity made them do through their sense of duty or Dharma. Under the Western machine, they are state-governed, not self-governed; they do not help themselves, they elect people who help them from over their heads. They are merely the electorate. Real self-help, real self-government can never exist in any such mechanised form. Go to the people, inspire them with self-help if you know how to so inspire, so that by their own daily toil, their individual intelligence, they may work out a system of life uniformly developing all over the country. Your duty, the duty of the minority, is to reinforce *their* intelligence, to represent *their* organisation, to supplement *their* self-government by a state-government which has simply to protect, to supervise, not to work out or impose a system of life from above. The real workers in India, therefore,

not only cultivate self-help for themselves but leave enough room for all the people to cultivate the same virtue through all the affairs of their life. The whole country is to be classed as self-governing; no division into a governing class and the governed even in any Western form. The motto of the real workers in India is "Self-help for all."

And lastly, there must be no false egoism in the real workers of India. The worker-self in the worker must have to be metamorphosed into the worshipper. And India living in her cottages does not recognise the *worker* who claims to inspire, to lead; it only sees the leader, the inspirer, in the worshipper. It believes the worshipper, it trusts him alone with his soul, with his life. So be the worshipper, if worker you must have to be in India, and the method is not difficult for any one belonging to the soil thereof. Workers must have a religious basis of life. The irreligious worker is an out-and-out foreign commodity which will never be an acceptable offering in the sacraments of the motherland. In the present tinsel tawdriness of public life, it may shine for a while as an imitation jewel, but in the coming days of real practical work, when the soul of the worker will have to vibrate to the real soul of his motherland, the irreligious worker will spontaneously fall behind the lines. But who in India can aspire to work and still remain really irreligious in his soul? None. Scratch the loudest atheist among the children of Mother India, and you will find him the believer, faithful to the blood of his forefathers. Can the shallow veneer of a generation of tall talk disguise for ever the substance below, the offspring of centuries of culture!

Go back, therefore, to your religion, everyone who wants to be a real worker in the Mother's vineyard. By prayer or worship in any form, by Japam or by meditation, fix the compass of your mind towards your God. This is the real grounding, the very first requisite, for the true worker in India, aye, a

Godward mind-compass. The setting must be perpetual, like the magnetic needle set towards the north. Wherever you may be moving about during the day, whatever may be claiming your attention and energy, the mind-compass must point to that one direction. There is such a mental state in the scale of spiritual achievement and it should not be difficult for any earnest, energetic worker to attain it.

And when the mind-compass is thus set Godward once for all, concomitantly there becomes established in the heart a feeling of love, of worship, of adoration. The perpetual setting of the mind-compass acts like a fixed stimulus, as it were, to keep up this response from the heart. The stimulus and the response overlap each other of course, so that one has simply a unity and a flow of perpetual experience, the constant sense of one's God being worshipped. And no worker can be a real worker in this land until and unless he has lifted himself up by preliminary practice to the plain of this abiding experience. There are, of course, greater altitudes for the Karmayogin, but this abiding sense of one's God being perpetually worshipped in mind and heart is the minimum of qualification for every true worker and servant of India.

For it is only when the worker is so qualified and grounded in spirituality that he constantly sees only the worshipper in himself, and not the important worker to be reckoned with and counted upon by others. Only then, he can have no puffed-up feeling about himself and his own importance, or any narrowness of enthusiasm about the cause that he represents. Only then are eradicated the root-causes of all that friction, so frequent now-a-days amongst superficial workers. For then the real worker feels in everything he does the worship that is perpetually going on, and the feeling fits in like a framework upon all his activities. It makes him gracefully and whole-heartedly devoted to every work

that falls to his lot and invests him with a peculiar power and attraction which nobody can ignore. Such workers, indeed, constitute that cementing factor which alone can bring about the unity and organisation, of which India, aye, the whole world, is now in the sorest need. They alone can lead men to live up to broader ideals of life, while others simply may create much fuss that quiets down to sorry fun or failure, and very often to lasting mischief.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Translated from Bengali.)

CXXVI.

Salutation to Bhagavan Ramakrishna.

Gazipur,
March, 1890.

Beloved Akhandananda,

Very glad to receive your letter yesterday. I am at present staying with the wonderful Yogi and devotee of this place, called Pavhariji. He never comes out of his room—and holds conversations with people from behind the door. Inside the room there is a pit in which he lives. It is rumoured that he remains in a state of Samadhi for months together. His fortitude is most wonderful. Our Bengal is the land of Bhakti and of Jnana, where Yoga is scarcely so much as talked of even. What little there is, is but the queer breathing exercises of the *Hathayoga*—which is nothing but a kind of gymnastics. Therefore I am staying with this wonderful *Rajayogin*—and he has given me some hopes, too. There is a beautiful Bungalow in a small garden belonging to a gentleman here; I mean to stay there. The garden is quite close to Babaji's cottage. A brother of the Babaji stays there to look after the comforts of the Sadhus, and I shall have my *Bhiksha* at his place. Hence, with a view to see to the

end of this fun I give up for the present my plan of going to the hills. For the last two months I have got an attack of Lumbago in the waist, which also makes it impossible to climb the hills now. Therefore let me wait and see what Babaji would give me.

My motto is to learn whatever good things I may come across anywhere. This leads many friends to think that it will take away from my devotion to the Guru. These ideas I count as those of lunatics and bigots. For all Gurus are one, and are fragments and radiations of God, the Universal Guru.

If you come to Gazipur you have but to enquire at Satis Babu's or Gagan Babu's at Gorabazar, and you will know my whereabouts. Or, Pavhari Baba is so well-known a person here, that everyone will inform you about his Ashrama at the very mention of his name, and you have only to go there and enquire about the Paramahansa, and they will tell you of me. Down Moghul Sarai there is a station named Dildarnagar, where you have to change to a short Branch Railway and get down at Tarighat, opposite Gazipur; then you have to cross the Ganges to reach Gazipur.

For the present, I stay at Gazipur for some days, and wait and see what the Babaji does. If you come, we shall stay together at the said Bungalow for sometime, and then start for the hills, or for any other place we may decide upon. Don't, please, write to anyone at Baranagore that I am staying at Gazipur.

With blessings and best wishes,

Ever yours,

Vivekananda.

CXXIX.

(Translated from Bengali.)

Salutation to Bhagavan Ramakrishna!

Gazipur,
March, 1890.

Beloved Akhandananda,

Received another letter of yours just now, and with great difficulty deciphered the scrib-

blings. I have written everything in detail in my last letter. You start immediately on receipt of this. I know the route to Thibet via Nepal that you have spoken of. As they don't allow anyone to enter Thibet easily, so they don't allow anybody to go anywhere in Nepal, except Katmandu, its capital, and one or two places of pilgrimage. But a friend of mine is now a tutor to His Highness the Maharaja of Nepal, and a teacher in his school, from whom I have it that when the Nepal Government send their subsidy to China, they send it via Lhasa. A Sadhu contrived in that way to go to Lhasa, China, Manchuria, and even to the *Pitha* (holy seat) of Tara Devi, in North China. We, too, can visit with dignity and respect Thibet, China, Lhasa, and all, if that friend of mine tries to arrange it. You therefore start immediately for Gazipur. After a few days' stay here with the Babaji, I shall correspond with my friend, and everything arranged, I shall certainly go to Thibet via Nepal.

You have to get down at Dildarnagar to come to Gazipur. It is three or four stations down Moghul Sarai. I would have sent you the passage if I could collect it here; so you get it together and come. Gagan Babu—with whom I am putting up—is an exceedingly courteous, noble and generous-minded man. No sooner did he come to know of K—'s illness, than he sent him the passage at Hrishikesh; he has besides spent much on my account. Under the circumstances it would be violating a Sannyasin's duty to tax him for the passage to Kashmir, and I desist from it. You collect the fare and start as soon as you receive this letter. Let the craze for visiting Amarnath be put back for the present.

Yours affectionately,

Vivekananda.



THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER.

Oh! speak again Thy word of peace, Oh Word of God,
As spokest Thou of old;

Oh! tread the waters of a mad world's life forlorn—
The roaring tempest scold—

By evil sprite possessed, the evil sprite of wars,
Who hides by lures of peace his iron gory spurs!

While still man drives to battle's hell his brother man
For mead of glory mean,

While still the higher ends of life are crushed amain
By weight of state-machine,

Do ply Thy probe, Oh Lord, and sift the human heart,
To show how lust of power plays loud piety's part!

For as long nations strive for sway of arms and state
O'er lives of men on earth,

So long the scramble lives of rival states, and war
Exploits life's aim and worth.

Oh God of Christmas! lost the way to peace, afar
We stray, so flash Thy light on anarchs of the war.

Reveal the glory of the human will divine,
—The human will in each,

That mechanised by state-control is fuel fair
For war in blazing pitch,

But free, self-disciplined, it builds a nationhood
That keeps the state to guard alone its self-wrought good,

Oh, Love of God, let Christmas bells that toll to-day
From all the lands declare,—

Than million factories and wheels of government
Thy Man is greater far.

And man as man does never vote for war of greed,—
His despotizing as the state creates that need!

And Thou, Eternal Christ, Thou comest still on earth
Aye, even in this age.

Thy gospel cradled safe from reeking battlefields
Awaits the proper stage;

But "peace, oh peace," the jaded souls of men do cry,
Shall rivalry this unity of soul outvie?

H. H. THE MAHARAJA OF ALWAR ON THE SITUATION.

(THE DUSSERAH SPEECH.)

A full copy of the speech delivered by His Highness on the occasion of the Dusserah festival at Alwar was very kindly placed on our table early last month, but unfortunately for want of space, it could not appear in our November number. And instead of a belated publication of the whole text, we give below a short review of the salient points, adding citations where necessary.

It is very encouraging, no doubt, to find in the utterances of His Highness a most enlightened interest in the larger problems of the whole motherland, and his sentiments have a ring of sincere solicitude and solid thoughtfulness which compel attention.

The Dusserah speech opens with a proposal to celebrate "Our Day" on the 12th December in Alwar. "By a happy coincidence," H. H. points out, "this date falls on the anniversary of the day when we assumed the reins of the government of our State 15 years ago. Let us hope that the coincidence may not only be auspicious but that it may materially help towards the success of the cause we shall make our own."

Coming to deal with the present situation in India, His Highness begins with the inevitable topic of the war :

This gigantic "War of Liberty" which has caused such mighty upheavals in the major portion of the world has also very naturally had its effects in India. Trumpets of liberty and freedom are giving their ceaseless blast in the very midst of the din of battle where hundreds are daily sacrificing their lives for the freedom of millions. The destinies of countries are changing colours from day to day and all this upheaval has naturally led India to compare notes—if not with other countries—at least with her sister dominions which have proved to be such assets of the Empire.

The trust which has been so implicitly reposed in the Self governing Dominions by the British peoples is repaid a thousandfold in their attitude towards the pivot of the great Commonwealth, and although India's share in the present war has been generously appreciated by the British public, if I am interpreting India's sentiments rightly, I think she feels that she might have been capable of doing very great deal more if she had had greater opportunity of guiding her own destinies.

His Highness then makes very grateful references to the allotment of a place to India in "the recent and future Imperial Conferences of Colonial Ministers," to the gracious announcement made by the British Cabinet through our Secretary of State as to the policy of granting responsible government to the Indian people, and lastly to the noble speech of the Viceroy of India from his Simla Council exhorting unity of effort all over the land for reaching that happy goal.

But the announcement of the goal has been followed by an upheaval of controversies among different interests in the country which forms a very unpleasant feature of the whole situation :

Although I fully realise that in all big undertakings that are worth the name, obstacles and difficulties must always arise, surely it is for human endeavour to overcome them to the best of its abilities. I therefore can see no room why even divergent interests should sow the seed of mutual unpleasantness if the goal that lies before us is kept clearly in view. It is mutual distrust centred in selfish interests that is generally responsible for the outburst of hysterics.

If the issues before us are going to lead us to no other destination than to a gigantic tug of war for communal interests based on mutual-distrust, then the future is foredoomed. There is the English official community and the Anglo-Indian commercial community; then there is the Indian official and non-official public of the country including Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsis and so forth. There is a new word which for us in Northern India has come into existence recently and which I do not know how to translate into vernacular but which nevertheless signifies

another important community, namely the non-Brahmans; and last but not the least there is the class deserving of every sympathy from its countrymen, but wrongly called the 'Depressed classes.' I say wrongly, because the very meaning of the word does not somehow create the atmosphere which we all wish to imply in encouraging them to uplift themselves.

The interests of these and many communities are no doubt involved in our journey but is each incapable of assisting the other in harmony and good-will? Have there not been different communities in the past? Does anyone say that the fountain of love and good-will has dried from India's heart, that her sense of justice and gratitude has withered, that her stream of toleration and the power of viewing things in their proper perspective has disappeared? If this was so, this great nation of ours of which we feel proud would not have survived the test of the struggle of existence for so many centuries. What other land in the world can boast of so many chutches alongside mosques and mosques alongside temples? Is this not toleration? Does this not show a respect for others' opinions and principles? India only waits for the opportunity and I have faith that it will prove its worth again in the future.

I maintain that she cannot be a patriotic son of the empire or a well-wisher of our motherland who helps in accentuating these feelings of mistrust and mutual bitterness.

It seems to me that when all communities in India appear to be united in the idea of the goal, the differences merely lie in the proposed method of achievement or in the divergent views as to the pace at which we are to advance.

As regards differences in the conception of the method to be pursued in achieving the common end, His Highness insists that such differences may well be eventually harmonised by mutual love and good-will amongst the various communities.

Now if the political goal of all the communities in India is the same—namely, greater freedom in order that this country may rank alongside the other sister Dominions of the Empire, then surely it is an occasion for mutual congratulation, joy and good-will instead of for heated controversies, wild

vituperation and calumny, or for unbecoming and ungracious interpretation of each others' sentiments and principles.

And in respect of differences of opinion as to the pace at which India is to move towards the goal of self-government, His Highness expresses himself as follows :

To my mind the pace depends entirely on India and India alone. I will demonstrate what I mean with an example. The mother is busy in her household work and has left her child to play with a toy in his hands. The child begins to cry. The mother comes to him, gives him another toy and goes back to her work once more. The child cries again and the mother returns and places before him a few more toys and the baby is satisfied. But eventually the child begins to cry for the milk of life and no toy or diversion of his mind will cease his heart-rending cries and the mother fondly lifts him up in her arms and gives him milk.

It is when a United India will feel the real need for such power, it may be to-morrow—five years hence, ten years or hundred years hence—let no one remain dissatisfied—shall we say one thousand years hence, and you know I am no pessimist—but whenever it be—it will come only when that united cry goes up to the Eternal Mother or Father, call Him by what name you like. Then He will lift us all up in His arms, to whichever nationality we belong, and give us the milk we want.

Then, in connection with the visit of the Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India, His Highness deeply regrets the attitude of some people who "sow the seed of unpleasantness" concerning this great event. "Is it becoming or will it facilitate his task," he asks, "if there are uncharitable and ungracious sentiments thrown broadcast about him? Will it assist India, if he sees it disunited?" So His Highness earnestly implores all his fellow-men in India, of whatever community, rank or occupation, to work for mutual good-will and unity of interests and loyally and gratefully co-operate with the Government in the task of helping India on towards her future destinies, thus demonstrating her firm confidence in British statesmanship and in

British principles, namely "that they will not betray her in her time of need but assist her in taking a really substantial step, forward towards her promised destination."

The speech then concludes with the following:—

And now gentlemen,—one word more and I will close. Supposing for argument's sake that India had her ultimate object fulfilled and all that seems impossible were made possible. Supposing we had our heart's desires fulfilled to-morrow by having in our own hands our birth-right of guiding the destinies of India; I do ask, would that be the 'be-all and the end-all' of our existence? Let us not forget in the midst of all this present military, social and political upheaval of the world, that the object of life is still distant and lies in the ultimate rising of the soul towards its final emancipation. We must not only unite India in love, but deluge the world with our spiritual forces of affection and the higher knowledge of the Self for the general good of humanity and of mankind. In the same way as we have much to take we have also some very rich treasures to give. It is indeed a high ideal—and some people will say a far-fetched ambition—let it be so—but it is our golden birth-right and our heritage in the East and are we going to lose it for what, though necessary but comparatively speaking, is the brass glamour of political power?

Our country, whether it is the two-thirds represented by British territory or the one-third representative of the principalities which after all are only the different limbs of the same organism, has before it the noblest goal of final emancipation; then let us all join hands in a vast song of harmony and love, affection and good-will and pray to Almighty that He may give us strength and knowledge in order that we may attain our ultimate and final goal and salvation.

It is, perhaps, needless to point out that the concluding statements of His Highness's speech draws pointed attention to the real national mission of India in the world. The task of upbuilding a nation in India, therefore, can never proceed on right lines unless in the manipulation of all the factors and

elements of our national life we make sure, from the very outset, of the ways and means towards the fulfilment of this national mission. We must make the very foundations of our collective life characteristic of this mission and the Prabuddha Bharata always attempts to show how this can be done. In the West, life is sought to be built up and systematised from the top downwards, from the political state towards the common individual unit, so that the whole of national life becomes inevitably political in its trend and mission. But in India life must have to be organised from the base upwards, from the *swadharma*s of the individuals to the protective and punitive duties of the state. Life here must be *democratic* in its foundations, dependent on the individual sense of Dharma. And then to represent this real, basic self-government and all its protective needs and collective capabilities, the "educated" minority must form an elected body amongst themselves having an effective voice in the conduct of the political state. The present movement for political rights and privileges is only a movement towards organising this upper limb, this superstructure, so to speak, of the whole nation but the more important task of re-organising the real foundations of the nation on the basis of the Praja-dharma of the people still lies waiting for the real workers and nation-builders to appear on the field.

A CALL TO SUPPORT A NOBLE CAUSE.

Education on national lines is a subject engaging the attention of the best brains of the country. And by consensus of opinion it has been settled as an ultimate fact, that besides being the means of inculcating the highest ideals and principles of life and conduct, education should be such as to enable boys and girls to meet successfully the various new social and economic problems which are likely to confront them on the practical field of

their daily existence by bringing into expression the infinite power that is within every one of them. The Vedas enjoin that man is no less than the Deity Himself—the store-house of infinite knowledge and bliss, and whatsoever helps him to realise and live up to that ideal nature of his own is education. Or in other words, it is the process to remove the barriers that hinder the flow of the infinite light and power which form the real nature of every man and woman alike. Thus the goal of educational systems all over the world remaining always the same, each nation will have to find out for itself the process that would suit best its past ideals and traditions to bring into fruition the objects stated above. It does not follow, however, that in order to remain true to its hallowed ideals of the past, there is no room for a nation to accept in its educational system anything that may prove useful to its growth and development from any other nation. Truths should be accepted wherever we may find them. And a nation which hesitates to include in its system the great discoveries of modern science and the new methods of imparting education which have been found out of late, will find itself always the loser for it. The essential principles which we shall have to observe in accepting them, as well as anything else, from other nations, are consistency and assimilation and not mere imitation. We must accept and assimilate them in such a way that they shall move in harmony with and not be antagonistic to our national aims and ideals of the past.

The Trust Committee of the Belur Math have, with the help, first, of the late Sister Nivedita and then, of the Sister Christine, been conducting an educational work for girls and purdah-ladies at 17, Rose Para Lane, Calcutta, on the lines and principles mentioned above. The success that has attended their efforts in this matter, has often been brought to the notice of the public through the reports issued of the work. The institution has been offering free education to children and purdah-women for about the last fifteen years. Counting roughly the number of unmarried and married girls entering the school annually to be fifty and twenty respectively, it will be found that the work has helped to educate more than 700 girls of the former and 300 of the latter class during the period. While the number of indigent purdah-women trained by

it to earn their own livelihood by teaching, sewing, fine needle-work etc., has been no less than 200 during the time. The Kindergarten system, we trust, was introduced in its children's department long before the use of the same by any other school in Calcutta. A purdah-lady student of the school joined the Lady Dufferin Hospital in Calcutta on the recommendation of the late Vicerine, Lady Minto, who was most gracious to visit the school on several occasions—and after attending the studies and practical training-work there for more than three years, has earned the diploma of a trained nurse and midwife. Several students of the school have begun their career as school-mistresses elsewhere; others have consecrated their lives to the cause of spreading education among purdah-women by entering into the teaching-staff of the school itself; while others still, have made the resolve of founding similar institutions in different parts of the country.

The work has thus proved its unique usefulness in various ways, surely but silently; and the time has come for the public to stretch its generous hand for its support and safe continuance in future by removing its pressing needs. The Trust Committee of the Belur Math are trying at present to secure a suitable plot of land measuring about 18 cottahs, in the Nivedita Lane, Baghbazar, and raise a building on the same for the permanent location of the work. The land itself will cost about Rs. 29,000 and it need not be said that the building to be raised will cost no less. We send out this earnest appeal, therefore, to our generous countrymen, to come forward to help the noble institution. The valuable life of the Sister Nivedita, who had identified herself so completely with India and her people, has been sacrificed at the altar of this temple of education. Another noble lady whose life is none the less valuable and useful to the cause of poor India, the Sister Christine, has been giving her heart's blood, drop by drop, to rally an earnest band of consecrated lives around that altar for the last fifteen years. Many a noble daughter of India have come forward unreservedly in response to the call. It behoves us now, dear friends, brothers and countrymen, to come forward to help them cordially, to secure the permanent continuance of the noble work in a habitation of its own. Remember always what the

Swami Vivekananda said about the solution of the women question in India—"It is not for us, men, to dictate and chalk out hard and fast plans for the amelioration of women's condition but help them get a fair education as was the custom in the Vedic ages. Do that and leave unto women the task of solving their own problems."

Brahmananda.

President, Ramkrishna Math & Mission.

N.B.—Contributions, however small, towards the Land and Building Fund of the Vivekananda Women's Work and the Nivedita Girls' School, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by (1) the President, Math and Mission, Belur, Howrah, and (2) Secretary, Ramkrishna Math and Mission, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazār, Calcutta.

OUR WINTER.

(PRIYAMVADA DEVI)

Our winter is come, and farewell to autumn mellowed and subdued. It has neither the cruelty nor the barrenness of the occidental cold season, for our sky is seldom bleak and our trees *never* bare. Most of them are evergreen, and a few only shed their leaves entirely. The green meadows look softer and greener with the generous fall of dew, and glisten with brightness in the morning sun. Birds sing, the doves constantly and the other songsters occasionally—the cuckoo, the finch and the golden-throated bird we call papiya. Little humming birds flash forth like living jewels in the air and whistle in soft whispering notes. 'Kokil,' our bird of love, precursor of spring, prince of melodians, previous to his migration to other lands and climes, pours forth a prelude of farewell chants, enchantingly beautiful, which makes one dream only of spring, when entering the portals of winter. Grey gossamer mist getting whiter in the morning light and orange-yellow at sunset is fascinating, wooing the eyes by its delicate charm for constant looks.

The winter garden is bright with flowers, not natives of the soil, but kindly strangers, who come for a while to make our life bright with colour and sweet with scent. They are our season flowers, the rose, the chrysanthemum, the pansy and the

violet. It is curious that these domesticated ones flourish only when the flowers of the land, Ashoka, Champak, Ketaki, Bakul, Kadamba and Shephalka, each reigning supreme for a season, from spring to autumn, in perfect bloom and potent perfume, fall victim to time. Lotus, not only the flower of the whole land but the emblem of it too, disappears under deep water. Of all the indigenous flowers, the crimson 'Jaba' (hibiscus) blows undaunted all the year through, fluttering its veined bright petals in the face of the sharp cold wind. Sturdy marigolds, pure snow-white Kundas and sky-blue Aparajitas, nod their heads and laugh at old Time and his scythe. These flowers are daily gathered in large numbers as offerings to the gods and are in full bloom, the whole year round; except perhaps the Kunda and marigold, which only come to perfection and flower in abundance during the dark days of winter. Roses slowly open out their wax-white or tender pink petals as the bleak winter advances. Chrysanthemums make the gold of their hearts purer and shine brighter, hanging their numerous feathery petals like some divine fledgling, tremulous though unyielding, as the cruel winds roar on, slashing on and scattering tender leaves with their uncharitable and whip-like blows. One is reminded only of love sincere and unselfish, delicate as the dream of budding youth, holding on firmly to the strength of its divine birthright, giving in neither to powerful time nor to cruel circumstance, retaining all along the purity of its form and the fairness of its spirit, though rain washes away the honey and splashes the beauty of the petals with mud.

A NEW SCHOOL OF INDIAN ECONOMICS.

Professor Radha Kamal Mukerjee M.A., P.R.S., Special Lecturer on Indian Economics of the Lahore University this session, delivered in the University Hall, under the presidency of the Hon'ble Mr. H. J. Maynard, M.A., I.C.S., C.S.I., vice-Chancellor, his opening lecture outlining his scheme of an independent School of Indian Economics. Professor Mukherji spoke first about India's debt to the ancient northern schools of religion and philosophy, of politics and economics,

and to Tavilla, the most cosmopolitan University town of the ancient East, the home of Kautilya. Kautilya mentions not less than 17 schools of economics and politics. Coming as the lecturer did from Bengal, it was no small tribute of homage that was due to these ancient northern schools and their seats, the Paishady and Siems, and the University of Tavilla, when he outlined at the Punjab University the scheme of a new and independent school of Indian Economics. In the dissertations relating to "Varta, Koshavardhana, Jana-pada, Nidhesha and Karma-Sandhi," there was no divorce of science from life. In the University of India to-day, on the other hand, economics is associated with barren abstractions and partial generalisations which are more and more widening the breach between the college and the workshop, the laboratory and the field, the art-school and the shop—a breach seldom observed in the scheme of ancient Indian thought and life. Western economics, the lecturer urged, based as it is on the Socio-economic evolution of one type, viz. Greco-Roman, can furnish only intermediate generalisations which have to be compared and collated with the principles derived from analyses of Eastern social evolution. He examined the effects of the application of such partial generalisations in the destruction of the village, of the related arts and crafts and the introduction of the de-humanised and de-socialised methods of production with all that it involves: the uninhabitable "Busti," the disintegration of family and social groups, the breaking-up of the communal order based on human and natural relationships, and the economic and social unsettlement in India. He emphasised the necessity of developing a new regional economics for India which will, on the one hand, contribute towards the formulation, on the basis of a genetic and comparative study, of a universal economics and, on the other, will not forget the historical and social environment of India, but find in her traditional communal sense, habits and institutions the vital elements of economic reconstruction and progress. It will definitely address itself to the task of the re-arrangement of economic life to hold in check the disruptive forces and tendencies of latter-day industrialism characterised by an unethical competition and an anti-social individualism, and of furnishing the social fabric with a well-balanced

industrial order, where the apparent conflict between the communalism of the East and the competition of the West will be set at rest in a harmonious realisation of the ends of well-being and culture. In the West, the instincts of appropriation and possession are strong, and economic institutions have emphasised those aspects of human nature, which in their unchecked operations have resulted in individual appropriation and exploitation. Both economic and political constitution, developed in the West, has shown remarkable mechanical efficiency under the monistic theory of Social grouping, - under dominating central organs such as the militaristic or capitalistic types of state-control, but life and well-being have to some measure been sacrificed. This principle of Social grouping which has produced the centralised organisation of trusts and Kartals, Socialistic states and Germanic empires for exploitation, has also exhibited explosive and devastating forces in the form of supermen and anarchs dominating to their advantage in every field of social life. And now there arises the imperative need of a new pluralistic principle of Social grouping. In the East, the principle of Social grouping has recognised the force and independent interests of the original constituent bodies and individuals, resulting not in the concentration of power in a central organ, but in decentralised polity, and the diffusion of industry, of wealth, of population and of social functions and activities. In India this pluralistic principle feeds itself on a characteristic spiritual outlook of life and the universe, and an attitude of mind which has gone beyond a mere abstract and barren monotheism in its conception of Viswarupa and Viswadeva, the world-body of God and His infinite manifestations in finite names and forms.

Industrialism and state-socialism with their shibboleths of mechanical and administrative efficiency have now become hostile to life and culture. India yet stands for life as against mechanism, for personality and humanity as against mechanical efficiency, for human sympathies and private affections, not artificial relationships, for voluntary co-operation on social grounds, not state-organisation along one line, for self-direction and freedom,—freedom for "stark sense and blind matter" in a life of intellectual and spiritual discipline where the practice of the gospel of the

work and wealth makes economic activity the part of a religious sacrament. It is only the economics of communalism which is akin to the spiritual outlook that India stands for, which can rescue the world from the mad pursuit of monopolistic appropriation and advantage, mechanical efficiency and power, and redeem it from the inevitable sins.

—"The Bengalee."

REVIEWS.

1. *The Dream Problem and its many Solutions in Search after Ultimate Truth*; Edited and compiled by Dr. Ram Narayan, I. M. S., Editor, "Practical Medicine"; price not written.

This book, the *Dream Problem*, has a strange, little history of its own. Sometime ago, the able editor of "Practical Medicine," Delhi, circulated far and wide the report of a curious dream giving rise to the problem as to how a dreamer aware of the unreality of his dream can convince the human creatures of his dream of the same unreality. The puzzle was taken up by the many Eastern and Western correspondents of the Editor and in proposing a solution, most of them brought out highly philosophical disquisitions on the states and planes of consciousness, while others had the no less goodness to send in their views or solutions in brief, and a few, even clever psychological recipes for the puzzled dreamer. All this entertaining variety of correspondence has been compiled in the form of the present book by the enterprising editor of "Practical Medicine," adding a long dissertation of his own at the end of this first volume on the threefold states of consciousness *à la mode* the Yoga-vāshishtha. It goes without saying that the whole compilation, so dexterously engineered into the market, is bound to prove deeply interesting and thought-provoking to all philosophical controversialists, besides providing them with first-hand information of various types and view-points of ontological speculation.

We have our doubts as to the authenticity of the very dream which set the ball of discussion rolling. We know of dreamers who have sometimes retained even a strong sense of the unreality of a dream while dreaming it. But the actual facts in such cases do not admit of the possibility of any recurring desire on the part of

the dreamer to disabuse the minds of his dream creatures of the sense of their reality. For the dreamer's own sense of their unreality grows stronger in proportion as the idea that he is merely dreaming persists at the time of the dream, and he is never likely to feel any impulse to seriously negotiate with shadows in the interest of proving any truth to them. We have found that in dreams of which the dreaminess is apparent to the dreamer, he becomes something like a passive witness, even though swayed sometimes by agreeable or disagreeable feelings, and when the latter become strong, the dreamer would fain awaken himself from the dream rather than allow his mind to be consciously hypnotised any longer. The dream-world once known by the dreamer as such appears so much like the dream-world of *Alice in the Wonderland*, so much unsubstantial, that is to say, compared to the reality of the dreamer and the real world he feels himself to belong to, that it is impossible for him at that time to attribute to the dream creatures that amount of reality which may justify any wish on his part to discuss with them the question of their unsubstantiality. This is the conclusion which every dreamer who ever *knowingly* dreamt any dream would draw from his own experience.

But if the real motive underlying the offer of the the dream problem by the editor of "Practical Medicine" is to lay before his correspondents in some attractive form the eternal question of the world-dream of human consciousness, then we would humbly suggest that instead of helping to multiply the endless labyrinthine yarns of the mere human intellect by inviting men like us to philosophise on the problem, a sincere religious aspirant had rather seek the *practical* discipleship of the great Buddhas of the world who alone know how to convince the dream creatures of the dreaminess of the world-dream. The mere multiplication of intellectual disquisitions, however learned, however Advaitic, however Yoga-vāshishtha-like, would neither break the dream nor yield any practical solution for doing so in anybody's case; for it is after a good deal of practical endeavour along lines preached by the Buddhas of the world that one can have even a glimpse of the dreaminess of our world-dream. No dreamer can philosophise himself out of the dream, if by philosophy is meant

the sort of intellectual performance which modern philosophers love so much to engage in.

2. *Epochs of Civilisation.* By Pramatha Nath Bose, B. Sc. (London). Published by Messrs. W. Newman & Co., Calcutta. Pp. 328, Price Rs. 4.

This book is a systematic study of the various civilisations that have arisen during the whole history of mankind covering a period of about 7000 years. The author divides this whole period into three epochs, the first ending about B. C. 2000, the second about A. D. 700 and the third still continuing. Under the first epoch are grouped the Egyptian, the Babylonian and the Chinese civilisations, under the second the Indian and the Greco-Roman, and under the third the modern European civilisation. Each civilisation again may have three stages of development, the first stage characterised mainly by efforts and achievements towards material efficiency and advancement, the second by a progressive intellectual refinement, and the third by a progressive equipoise of forces that make for material development on one side and for ethical development on the other, so that civilisation now works more towards stability than towards mobility. Of all the civilisations studied in this book, only the Chinese and the Indian are credited with having decisively attained the third stage, and they are therefore unique in their stability. The European civilisation of the modern epoch is still characterised by that conflict of forces which may or may not advance it to the third stage according as the final equipoise will have been worked out or not.

A faithful votary of modern science, the author, Mr. P. N. Bose, receives his main support for his theory of civilisation from evolutionists who maintain that over and above the animal nature of man evolved directly from his animal progenitors, he exhibits the workings of a higher nature within him "which has not been developed by means of the struggle for existence" (Wallace). In working out his theory of the third stage in civilisation, the author evidently takes his ultimate stand on the acceptance by modern science of this "extra-cosmic" factor of human life.

But while it must be admitted by every reader of this interesting volume that the author has turned to the best account his thorough scientific training

under European masters of scientific study and research, and that his book admirably illustrates the so-called masterly manipulation of facts and factors of civilised life and its evolution by the modern scientific method of comparison and generalisation, we cannot but point out that this very method and training in modern science do not constitute the last word in correct investigations into human life and its phenomena. Life can be properly explained only by life, and European science and its methods are but the reflection of the superficial life which forms the present stadium of Western civilisation. The cultural products of such a life can never give us the proper standards for judging or studying the course of more lasting civilisations in other parts of the world. Therefore, the author of the "Epochs of Civilisation" cuts but a sorry figure specially when with his narrow, ill-suited scientific gauges, he wades and labours through the ill-assorted mass of his collected facts and findings relating to the ancient history of India, for instance, in order to establish generalisations conformably to his theory of the three stages of development in civilisations. An ancient civilisation like that of India may certainly be depended upon to yield us a philosophy of its own of human life, a philosophy which is nothing but the wisdom of the experience of centuries. Such a philosophy is undoubtedly the best organon for studying the civilisation of which it is both the product and the theory. And over and above, if this philosophy is broad enough to be able to assess at their proper value the scientific methods and conceptions which underlie modern antiquarian studies, no historian can have any excuse whatsoever for ignoring the standpoint of this philosophy as the greatest interpretative factor in all investigations into the civilisation of which it is the crowning product and achievement. We refuse to admit that any scientist, however well-equipped with facts and scientific instruments of enquiry, can interpret properly the history of India unless he has already mastered both in theory and practice, this philosophy of Indian life and civilisation. Life only can interpret life; and modern historians do only interpret life in such of its depths as they themselves live their lives from. But that is no real interpretation at all; that is mere opinion with obvious, damaging, personal equations.

RAMKRISHNA MISSION SEVA-SHRAMA REPORTS.

(1) THE BENARES REPORT.

The Sixteenth Annual Report of the Ramkrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares, is an interesting record of services done towards alleviating the sufferings of infirm and diseased men and women. The work of the Sevashrama has been steadily growing, entailing increased expenses due specially to the addition of 48 beds in the five wards newly opened. The construction of the male refuge is proceeding apace, the plan providing for 15 rooms accommodating 20 seats in the first storey. Each room is estimated to cost Rs. 1000. The success of the Female Refuge is a sufficient proof of the necessity of this kind of refuge in Benares, for it is the dream of every Hindu to die in this holiest of cities. During the year under report, 769 indoor cases were admitted into the Home and its Branch Refuge at Dasaswamedh. For want of accommodation patients suffering from infectious and female diseases had to be sent to other hospitals in the city at the expense of the Home. A number of Phthisis and Small Pox cases were treated, some in this way, others at their own homes or in temporary segregated wards in the Home itself. The Outdoor Dispensary treated 13,585 patients of whom 5042 were men, 3059 women, and the rest children. Of these cases 325 patients had to be served with diet also. During the year, 160 persons who were extremely poor obtained relief from the Home in the shape of 2 srs. of rice and as. 2 per head weekly. By providing immediate relief the Home saved during the year 14 starving persons, and 324 helpless men and women were also temporarily helped with money, food and clothing. The Home performed 151 surgical operations during the year. During the heavy floods of August 1916 the Home with the help and under the guidance of the headquarters of the Rk. Mission opened relief centres in Districts Benares and Balia, and distributed over 500 mds. of foodstuffs to the needy. The total receipts of the Home during the year were Rs. 26,774-8-7, and the total expenditure Rs. 35,317-12-9 showing a deficit of Rs. 8543-4-2, which has, like the previous year, been met from the last year's balance.

Well has it been remarked by Mr. G. B. Lambert I. C. S., Magistrate of Benares: "Workers' quarters, resident medical officer, dysentery wards, operation rooms, out-houses and the rest are only required because you have made yourselves indispensable to the relief and well-being of so many of your fellowmen and women." In fact, these are the present crying needs of the Home. The Workers' quarters should provide for 20 beds, each at a cost of Rs. 1000; the cost of the resident medical officer's quarters is estimated at Rs. 7500, that of the surgical ward Rs. 6000, and of the dysentery wards with 32 beds, Rs. 6500. Funds are needed for constructing these Wards, as well as for the general upkeep of the Home. The President of the Rk. Mission appeals on behalf of the Home, to all generous-hearted people to come forward and help in this service to suffering humanity. Contributions will be thankfully accepted by the Hon. Asst. Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares City.

(2) THE KANKHAL REPORT.

The work of the Ramkrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, as is evident from a perusal of the Sixteenth Annual Report (Jan.—Dec. 1916) has been steadily increasing in scope, and the number of indoor patients treated during the year under Report was 344, of whom 311 were discharged on recovery, 19 left treatment, 12 died, and 5 were still under treatment at the end of the year. Of these 226 were Sadhus, 9 Mahomedan Fakirs and the rest people of different castes. The outdoor dispensary treated during the period 13,114 patients, of whom 8,884 were men, 3,049 women, 800 boys and 381 girls. This number includes over 10000 poor pilgrims who came from different parts of India. From the Night School for the Depressed classes 17 boys appeared in the Annual Examination held by the Dy. Inspector of Schools; and of these 14 came out successful. The total receipts of the Ashrama during the year amounted to Rs. 6781-10 as. 6 p. and the total disbursements to Rs. 3,913-13 as. 3 p.

To meet the increased pressure of work the Ashrama is constructing a General Ward, to complete which a sum of Rs. 1500 is still needed. The present outdoor dispensary also is proving too incommodious and a spacious building on the

roadside is necessary for it, at an estimated cost of Rs. 5000. The third desideratum is a Guest House for the relatives of the diseased pilgrims admitted into the indoor hospital, which will cost about Rs. 3000. And lastly, a permanent building for the Night School, at an estimated cost of Rs. 3000, is also an urgent necessity. The Sevashrama earnestly appeals to all generous-minded people who can feel for the sufferings of the diseased, specially of those left far away from home, to lend it a helping hand in successfully carrying on this service of humanity. Contributions may kindly be sent to Swami Kalyanananda, President, Rk. Sevashrama, Kankhal, Dt. Saharanpur.

(3) THE BRINDABAN REPORT.

We are glad to notice here in review the disinterested labours of the R. K. Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban, during the year 1916, the tenth year of its existence. As in all the other Sevashramas, here also the work of service was carried on in a purely cosmopolitan spirit and without distinction of race, caste or creed. There were 330 indoor patients during the year under review and 8,153 outdoor patients. Of the former 269 were discharged cured, 33 died, 19 left treatment, one sent to the Muttra Govt. Hospital, and 5 remained under treatment at the end of the year. The Ashrama also helped 5 poor Pardanashin ladies with a monthly aid of Rs. 2 per head, and treated 37 indigent patients in their respective homes. The receipts of the Ashrama for the General Fund were Rs. 1587-13-6, and those for the Building Fund Rs. 3,711-12 as.

Through the benevolence of the public the Sevashrama has been able to acquire 8-32 acres of land on the banks of the Jumna, on which a male ward has already been constructed and a female ward is under construction. For the efficient management of the Ashrama the following are essentially needed: Separate Wards for the general infectious diseases, a Surgical Ward, an operation room, an outdoor Dispensary, a Kitchen, Workers' quarters, Menials' quarters, Lavatories and a Guest House, besides an Invalids' Home and a place of worship for contemplation and prayer.

Brindaban is one of the holiest sites of Northern India, sanctified by the memories of Bhagavan Sri Krishna's Divine sports on earth revived by Sri Chattanya and his illustrious followers. This makes Brindaban a centre of unique attraction to people of all parts of India, and the Sevashrama expects that generous donors will come forward by the hundreds to remove the above-mentioned wants, and thus minister to the comforts of the diseased pilgrims. Contributions will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Brahmachari Harendranath, R. K. Mission Sevashrama, Bangshibat, Brindaban, Dt. Muttra.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES.

We have been requested to publish the following announcement by the Hon'y. Secy., Calcutta Vivekananda Society:—

The following public lectures have been arranged by the Society to be delivered by the Hon'ble Justice Sir John Woodroffe in the Hall of the Bengal Theosophical Society at 5-30 p. m. on dates also noted below:

Saturday, 24th. Nov., 1917—Tantra and Veda; 1st. Dec.—Consciousness and its Power (Shakti); 8th. Dec.—Maya and Shakti; 15th Dec.—The Garland of Letters (Varnamala); 5th. Jan., 1918—Shakti Upasana and Sadhana; 12th. Jan.—Kundalini Yoga.

The first of these lectures is already reported to have been delivered before a crowded audience in the University Institute Hall, as it was found impossible at the eleventh hour to accommodate the large concourse of people who attended, in the Theosophical Society Hall.

We are glad to receive a copy of the Thirtieth Annual Report of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta,—a review of work and progress during the year 1916. It is a matter of congratulation that the vigour and vitality of the whole movement still prove themselves much stronger than would appear from the mere number of its enlisted adherents, which is about 1150; and the secret of it lies in the fact that, in spite of all contrary indications in scattered individual cases, it is essentially a *religious* movement seeking to establish the very pivot of its progress in a sincere spirituality of home life. So long as this spiritual main-current flows strong and vigorous, sought more to be replenished by the life and inspiration of men of spiritual realisations than to be sprucely refined on the surface by the glitter and dazzle of the so-called modern enlightenment, the movement is bound to form a lasting source of strength and help to the upbuilding of national life in India. The Report divides the varied activities of the Samaj under three headings,—mission work, educational work and philanthropic work, and in all these three spheres, affiliated institutions have grown up which honestly strive to work for the betterment of life here on earth and hereafter. There are 8 ordained missionaries of the Samaj and 9 workers, under training, devoted to mission work, besides 50 lay workers in the same line. The number of associated Samajas in the various parts of India amounts to 47, and their reports speak of hopeful activity and faith. We heartily wish the noble movement the success that it amply deserves as the dispenser of spiritual sustenance to the souls of thousands of our fellow-countrymen.